



Standards & Assessment UPDATE

From the Standards and Assessment Division

December 4, 2001

Addendum: Late-Breaking News

California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE)

Accommodations for Students With I.E.P./504 Plans Outlined

At its December Meeting, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved a waiver process for students who will be taking the CAHSEE with modifications that invalidate the score. Currently two modifications that are not allowed are listed in the Title 5 regulations (Section 1217[c]). They are:

- calculators on the math portion of the test.
- audio or oral presentation of the English/language arts portion of the test.

The policy approved by the SBE, "Adopted Waiver of Test Passage for Special Education Students," states the following as it relates to this issue:

In these specific cases, the LEA may request a waiver under the authority of Education Code section 56101, from the SBE of "successful passage of the CAHSEE," for those students who can show evidence of having completed and/or being successful in sufficient high school level coursework to complete a high school curriculum of sufficient rigor to have gained the skills and knowledge **otherwise** needed to pass the CAHSEE, and have also attained the equivalent of a passing score upon completing either the English/language arts and/or math sections of the CAHSEE test using modifications that are not allowed because they "fundamentally alter what the test measures" **(as stated in 5 CCR Section 1217(c) or determined under the 5 CCR Section 1218 request process)** thereby invalidating the student's test score **as provided for by 5 CCR Section 1219.5.**

If this waiver is granted by the SBE, these students may graduate from high school, and be given a diploma, even though by definition they have not "successfully passed the exit examination."

There are several steps in the process for appropriately using the waiver policy. Key steps include the following:

- Review the Title 5 Regulations for guidance in determining if the accommodation for a student, as specified in the I.E.P. or 504 plan as necessary for taking the CAHSEE, is allowable or if it is a modification that would fundamentally alter what the test seeks to measure.
- If the district cannot determine if the specified accommodation is allowable, submit a Request for Accommodations form to the California Department of Education (CDE)
- Districts may not use the request for accommodations process for the two accommodations not allowed by regulations:
 - audio/oral presentation of the ELA portion of the test
 - calculator for the mathematics portion of the test
- If the CDE grants the request, consider that the accommodation is allowable and proceed accordingly
- If the CDE denies the request, proceed using one of two options:
 - have the student take the test without the requested modification
 - have the student take the test with the requested modification, which will invalidate the score
- If the student takes the test with the denied accommodations or with an audio/oral presentation and receives an equivalent passing score, apply for the SBE-adopted waiver in the year after testing (i.e., apply in grade 11 if the student took that test in grade 10).

The Title 5 Regulations and the Request for Accommodations form, and the adopted waiver policy are available at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/statetests/cahsee/> on the Internet.

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Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program

Senate Bill 233 Provision

The SBE at its December meeting took action concerning the provision of Senate Bill 233 that relates to the California Standards Tests (CST) for history-social science and science at the elementary and middle school level. Board action determined that:

- Both tests will be cumulative in the standards covered.
- The history-social science test will be given in grade 8 and cover state content standards for grades 6, 7 and 8, with an emphasis on grade 8.
- The science test will be given in grade 5 and cover the content standards for grades 4 and 5.

In order to implement this action, the SBE will pursue legislation to remove the requirement for a CST in history-social science in grade 9.

STAR Recommendation Process for 2003-2005 Approved

As outlined in Education Code Section 60643, SBE must approve the contract to be entered by the California Department of Education (CDE) and the contractor for the STAR program. Prospective contractors will submit materials requested as part of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction's (SSPI) recommendation process. The SSPI will make a recommendation to the SBE, based on an evaluation process established by the SSPI.

Evaluation Panels

To assist in the SSPI's recommendation process, three panels of experts will be asked to independently evaluate the NRT, administrative, and CST-development proposals of each bidder. To provide the SSPI with most qualified individual, panelist members will consist of CDE staff, university experts, and school district staff that have the appropriate knowledge and experience.

Panel members will be selected based on their technical knowledge and experience in testing. Each panel grouping will consist of members whose expertise allows them to effectively specialize in assessing either the NRT, administrative, or CST-development proposals. Psychometric and content experts will be asked to evaluate the NRT and CST-development proposals. Individuals with extensive experience in administering testing programs who also have psychometric expertise will be asked to appraise the merit of the administrative proposals.

Panelists will provide a detailed discussion on the strengths and weakness of each proposal and make informed decisions on the best proposals. CDE staff will summarize these findings. One member from each panel, plus a fourth member, will review the findings of the panels and make a final recommendation to the SSPI.

Timeline for implementing STAR contract:

- **January 2002** – CDE distributes invitation to submit for contract
- **March 2002** – CDE receives and evaluates submissions for a comprehensive 3-year plan to administer STAR program
- **April 2002** – SBE selects a single contractor
- **May 2002** – The single contractor begins item development

State Board Approves Senate Bill 233 Policy

The SBE at its December meetings voted to approve its Board policy for implementing Senate Bill 233. Key points of the policy include:

- California Standards Tests (CST) are the official measure of progress toward meeting state content standards.
- A major goal is to reduce redundancies and testing time across the testing programs.
- The CDE and SBE will work collaboratively with the postsecondary community to produce GSE scores, combining results of the CSTs with GSE components, to:
 - inform postsecondary placement, college credit, or admission decisions
 - identify the content and degree of rigor needed on the exams for these purposes
- The English-language arts and mathematics standards tests, linking CST scores with the GSE component, should be completed for the 2003 administration.
- Additional standards tests, linking the CST and GSE, for other subject areas will be completed as end-of-course exams in future years.
- The GSE, for courses that are not covered by the CST, will continue to be administered independently (i.e., government/civics, economics, and Spanish)
- Changes in the CST blueprints will include:
 - the addition of foundational skill items
 - item rotation as needed to ensure breadth of standards coverage

For More Information...

For more information about any of the state assessments, contact the Standards and Assessment Division of the California Department of Education at (916) 657-3011 (phone), at (916) 657-4964 (fax), at STAR@cde.ca.gov (e-mail), or at www.cde.ca.gov (Internet). Your questions will be directed to the appropriate person.